Port entry facilities for large size tankers

975. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to port constraints for large size crude and product tankers berthing at ports is causing serious problems; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Central Government to provide adequate and deeper draft for large size tankers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The ports are generally equipped to handle large size crude and product tankers. However, improvement of the infrastructure of major ports in terms of handling large size crude and product tankers and other facilities in the country is an ongoing process. Under the Naticnal Maritime Development Programme (NMDP) formulated by the Department of Shipping a total number of 276 projects in the major ports involving development of berths, deepening of channels, equipment upgradation and modernization, rail and road connectivity and other associated projects are planned to be implemented by 2011-12.

Vessels for crude oil and petroleum

976. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether our country does not have adquate vessels to transport crude oil and petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken by the Central Government to acquire more vessels so that our oil companies do not have to depend upon foreign vessels for transportation of crude oil and products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Shipping is a truly international business therefore the transportation of Petroleum

Products to India is carried on both Indian and Foreign vesels. depending on the freight rates offered and availability of ships. The Indian tanker tonnage consist of 111 vessels as on 31.10.2006. These ships are engaged in either carrying Indian cargo or are enagaged in cross trade. 34% of India POL Exim trade was transported on Indian flag vessels during 2004-05.

(c) The Government has been taking various measures from time to time for the growth of Indian tonnage including tanker tonnage. These include:

(i) The acquisition of vessels has been brought under Open General Licence. The Shipowners are free to decide on type of ships to be acquired and their area of operation etc.

(ii) 100% FDI is permitted in Shipping Sector.

(iii) Rate of depreciation increased from 20% to 25%.

(iv) Tonnage Tax has been introduced from 2004-05 whereby in the matter of taxation a level playing field has been given to Indian Shipping Industry *vis-a-vis* international shipping industries.

(v) The formalities of registration of newly acquired vessels have been simplified.

Work contracts on BoT basis

977. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Model Concession Agreement on work contracts on BoT basis on National Highways and Expressways was finalized in March, 2006;

(b) whether it is a fact that not even a single BoT contract has been awarded since finalization of MCA in March, 2006, and if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Planning Commission has stipulated a pre-condition of 80% land acquisition for award of BoT contracts; and